

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE WITH CAROLS AND HOLY COMMUNION

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.

C: Praise be to God for light that shines in darkness.

P: God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, to shine in our hearts and give light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Praise be to God for the light in Jesus that enlightens every person.

OPENING CAROL "Green Book" 45 vs. 1 and 3 O Come, All Ye Faithful

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him Born the king of angels;
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God. In the highest:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

PREPARING OUR HEARTS

P: We gather in the name of our loving, saving God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—gathered on this holy night, to reflect on the mystery of birth.

C: The awesome mystery of Christ's birth, the birth of God in the flesh.

P: We pause on this holy eve, to step back from the Christmas rush.

C: We need to keep our focus clear, and remember that Christ's birth is the reason for the season.

P: Give us peace and calm in our hearts now, Lord, fill us with Your presence as we mark this Holy Night of Your birth.

C: Let this be for us a special night, A Holy Night different from all others, because it is Your Birthright.

CAROL "Green Book" 60 vs. 1 and 2 Hark the Herald Angels

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king."

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king."

SCRIPTURE READING "God's signature" Isaiah 7:10-17

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah--the king of Assyria."

CAROL "Green Book" 56 vs. 1 and 2 The First Noel

The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.

They look-ed up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.

SCRIPTURE READING "The Promised Child of David" Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

CAROL "Green Book" 71 vs. 1 and 2 Angels We Have Heard

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo;

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo;

SCRIPTURE READING "God with Us" Matthew 1:18-25

P: This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

C: Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

P: But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

C: All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"--which means "God with us".

P: When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

C: But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

STATEMENT OF BELIEF

C: I believe in God the Father almighty creator of the universe, all-powerful and all-loving God.

I believe in Jesus the Christ, the child of Bethlehem, God of God from all eternity, born in the flesh this Holy Night, born to be our Savior, born to suffer and die for our sins, born to be raised to conquer death, and give us hope of eternal life.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the presence of God among us now, the power of Christ within us, which makes holy this blessed eve, and renews our hearts in faith, binding together all the faithful, in bonds of Faith and Hope and Love, as we together keep the vigil, and reflect upon the mystery, of his birth on the earth, in this Holy Night.

CAROL "Green Book" 40 vs. 1 and 3 [What Child is This](#)

What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!

Why lies he in such mean estate Where ox and ass are feeding!
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh: Come peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Welcome to the celebration! God who supplies our every need has given us this meal to share.

C: Lord, we thank You for the bread of eternal life.

P: We come to the table, acknowledging our shortcomings and our need to experience Your presence in bread and wine.

C: Lord, we thank You for the bread of eternal life.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

THE DISTRIBUTION (Music)

CLOSING CAROL "Green Book" 65 Silent Night, Holy Night

(Individual candles will be lit during the singing, and extinguished after the Benediction. Those with lit candles remain still as those without lit candles bend their candles over to receive the light.)

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child,
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from your holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE